

The motion was carried.

The Secretary then read the title of the Bill as "The Travancore Kammala Bill."

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): Sir, I move that the Travancore Kammala Bill be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the following members:—

1. Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai
2. „ Kayalam Paramesvaran Pillai
3. „ Changanachery K. Paramesvaran Pillai
4. „ A. Thanu Pillai
5. „ Puthupalli S. Krishna Pillai
6. „ K. Kunjukrishna Pillai
7. „ R. Sivaraman Nair
8. „ N. Velu Achari
9. „ N. K. Krishna Pillai
10. „ T. P. Velayudhan Pillai
11. „ M. Sivatanu Pillai
12. „ M. K. Janardana Kamath
13. „ S. Paramesvara Aiyar
14. „ G. Nilakantan
15. Srimati T. Narayani Amma
16. Mr. K. M. Kuriakose and
17. „ A. Achyuthan.

MR. M. SIVATANU PILLAI (*Tovala*): I second it.

MR. N. VELU ACHARI (*Co-opted*): മിസ്റ്റർ ചട്ടനാഥകരയാളരേയും മിസ്റ്റർ ഇലങ്കത്തിനേയുംകൂടി ഈ കമ്മിറ്റിയിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടുത്തണമെന്നു ഞാൻ അഭിപ്രായപ്പെടുന്നു.

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): I accept the names. The Committee will report within three months.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I believe the House agrees to that motion.

The motion by the leave of the House was carried.

RESOLUTIONS ON MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST.

RESOLUTION *re* PONMUDI TO BE THE SUMMER QUARTERS OF GOVERNMENT.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: We will now pass on to the next business, viz., resolutions. The first resolution stands in the name of Mr. S. J. Nair.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Sir, I move the following resolution:

"This Assembly recommends to the Government that Ponmudi be converted into a town and be made the summer quarters of Government."

Sir, Ponmudi is an important place in Travancore. It is one of the first and foremost sanatoriums in the State, and it is the nearest sanatorium to the Capital.

MR. P. C. KURIYAN (*Kottayam I*): In which taluk is it located?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): It is in the Nedumangad taluk.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: There is nothing wrong in asking for information. But the location of Ponmudi is so well known that there is no necessity for such a question. Mr. Nair will proceed with the resolution.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Sir, the name Ponmudi is significant. It means 'golden crown'. That means that Ponmudi eclipses all sanatoriums in the State. It is about 38 miles north-east of Trivandrum and is being connected with the capital by a usable and useful road. It is about three thousand feet above the sea level. It commands a good, extensive and beautiful view and enchanting sight.

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): Is it above fever level?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): It is above fever, malaria and all other levels.

All around the heights of Ponmudi are tea and coffee estates. The tea grown there is considered as the best tea produced in Travancore.

MR. K. PADMANABHAN (*Chirayinkil I*): May I know the estimated cost of converting Ponmudi into a town?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): I will come to that.

There are two sanatoriums at Ponmudi. One is known as the upper sanatorium and the other the lower sanatorium. There is an ever-flowing and sparkling spring on the top of Ponmudi very near the upper sanatorium. This water can be collected and stored up in a tank or reservoir and made use of in the matter of water supply.

Sir, in the months of Dhanu, Makaram, Kumbham and Meenam it is not possible for officers who have got headquarters in Trivandrum to work very hard.

MR. MENATHERI N. KESAVA PANICKAR (*Nominated*): May I ask who feels the necessity for a sanatorium, the Government or the people?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Sir, the people are making this demand on behalf of the Government, and the officers of the Government themselves desire it.

MR. P. C. KURIYAN (*Kottayam I*): Has the member received any representation from any head of a department?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): In the interests of efficient work the representatives of the people must see that officers are given proper convenience and opportunities to work very hard so that work may be speedily turned out.

MR. K. PADMANABHAN (*Chirayinkil I*): Does the member propose that the Assembly also should meet there during the season?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Certainly. At least two sessions of the Assembly should be held there.

If Ponmudi is converted into a town and made the summer quarters of Government it will help the convenience and comfort of the people of Trivandrum in particular and of Travancore in general.

MR. K. PADMANABHAN (*Chirayinkil I*): Is it the member's view that the Government officers in Trivandrum are not working properly because of the climatic condition?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): They will work harder if they go there.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): May I know whether there are any Government buildings at Ponmudi?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Yes, there are two buildings.

MR. K. M. KURIAKOSE (*Muvattupuzha II*): What is the present population?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): There is no population.

RAO SAHIB MAHAKAVI S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*): Is the member aware that there is a loud agitation in British India both in the provinces and in the centre against the move to hill stations?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): That is because the hill stations there are situate far away from the headquarters. But Ponmudi is only 38 miles away from the capital.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): Is it the member's view that Government officers are not doing satisfactory work during the summer season because the Government offices are located in Trivandrum?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: He has already stated that they will do more satisfactory work. There is no necessity for repeating the question.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): There is an area of about 6 sq. miles lying waste at the top of Ponmudi peak. That may be divided into small plots or bits of 15 or 20 cents and people may be invited to purchase the land for building sites according to a town planning scheme. In this way it will be easy to convert Ponmudi into a town.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): May I know from the member the approximate cost of the scheme?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): It may not cost more than fifteen or twenty thousand rupees. The Government could realise a good sum by giving the land in registry. Out of that amount a town planning system could be worked out and additional Government buildings could be put up there.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum—Rural*): May I know whether the member would advocate Ponmudi being converted into a town even if the summer headquarters of Government are not shifted to that place.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Yes. But if the headquarters of Government are also located there it may attract a greater number of people and the place may command better convenience and it would develop into a town easily and speedily.

Sir, at the time of the former Dewans Mr. Raghaviah, Mr. Watts and Mr. V. S. Subrahmanya Aiyar, there was a proposal to convert Ponmudi into a town.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): May I know the extent of level area that is available there?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Level area is not necessary for a hill station. If the member had seen other hill stations he would not have asked that question.

MR. A. EASWARA PILLAI (*Kalkulam II*): May I know if any experts were consulted in the matter of converting Ponmudi into a town?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): I have brought this resolution for the consideration of the Government so that they may appoint some experts to go into the question.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): Is it the member's view that the Secretariat alone should be transferred there or also other head offices?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): That is left to the Government. My submission is that Ponmudi should be converted into a town and made the summer quarters of Government. If that is done, it would eclipse all other sanatoriums in South India and evoke jealousy even in those who go to Ooty; because, I know as a matter of fact that Ponmudi is an excellent sanatorium in South India. It is the queen of hill stations and the peak there is the crown, the golden crown.

MR. K. PADMANABHAN (*Chirayinkil I*): The member referred to former Dewans. May I know whether the former Dewans have taken any action in the matter?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): They told me in person when I met them there that they had the idea of converting it into a town. Hence, I move this resolution for the kind acceptance of the House.

MR. V. RAMAKRISHNA PANICKAR (*Kartikapalli II*): I second it.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I am constrained to say that in case a resolution is to be seconded those who want to do so must do it in time. But some delay has taken place. Mr. Ramakrishna Panickar has seconded it before I disposed of the question. I hold that the seconding is valid and proper. The resolution is open to discussion.

MR. M. SIVATANU PILLAI (*Tovala*): I oppose it.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings, and Irrigation*): It is rather a difficult proposition of Mr. S. J. Nair when he proposes that the Government's summer quarters should be at Ponmudi. But on behalf of the Government members and myself I convey our grateful thanks to Mr. S. J. Nair for his proposal. Personally we are all for it. We thank him for his solicitude on behalf of our health. But there is something which Mr. S. J. Nair has forgotten. He wants Ponmudi to be converted into a town. But every town has at least an industry. But there is nothing that I know at Ponmudi that would attract people for purposes of trade. Mr. S. J. Nair says that in Ponmudi there is plenty of tea. But the shop keepers cannot always be selling tea to each other. They would rapidly get tired of it and there would be no profit in the transaction. Mr. Nair says that Ponmudi is above the fever level; but I very much doubt that.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): May I know whether there is any particular industry at Ooty?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: We are dealing with Ponmudi.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): The honourable member has been saying that there must be some industry.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings, and Irrigation*): Yes, there are industries in Ootacamund and if the honourable member would go there he would see the industries to which I am referring. Mr. S. J. Nair said that there was a copious supply of water running down the hill opposite the sanatorium. That is not so. There is a small streamlet by which the lower sanatorium is supplied; but the only water that flows down the hill from the upper sanatorium is when there is rain. I may say that this is not a new question. It has been engaging the attention of Government for some years past and this file before me deals with a portion of it. But cost is the great thing. Buildings and houses will have to be built and an estimate of Rs. one lakh, which Mr. S. J. Nair mentioned, would not be sufficient for anything like an approach to the cost. I cannot understand why Mr. S. J. Nair has brought this proposal at the present time. The Government of Bombay has, I believe, stopped going to Mahabaleshwar during the summer months and the Government of Madras are considering the yearly move to Ootacamund. Delhi is raising some objection regarding the shifting of the headquarters to Simla and all these questions are for reasons of expense; for not only would the expense be incurred in building the town, but the considerable outlay that will have to be incurred each year in moving Government headquarters to Ponmudi. If only Mr. S. J. Nair would point out where funds could be obtained, the question could be considered; but unless and until it is done it is absolutely impossible for the Government to accept such a resolution. Therefore I would ask Mr. S. J. Nair to wait until a more favourable opportunity occurs to bring forward such a resolution.

MR. PACODE A. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Vilavankod*): Apart from the question of making Ponmudi the summer headquarters of the Government, is there any objection in Government developing suitable hill sanatoriums such as Ponmudi, Muthukuzhivayal, Pallivasal and such other places?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings, and Irrigation*): Now there are two buildings at Ponmudi and they are used at times. The difficulty is want of water. That can be got over. But the question of fund remains. If funds can be pointed out I am sure that Government would like to move there. Speaking on behalf of myself I should be delighted to make the move.

MR. K. M. KURIAKOSE (*Muvattupuzha II*): I wish to speak one or two words on the resolution. I would not have spoken anything on the subject if the Chief Engineer had not made such a statement as he made just now. It is accepted by the Chief Engineer that this question was before the Government from very early days and that it was

[Mr. K. M. Kuriakose.]

only the question of funds which prevented this question being carried out. Under such circumstances I want to make one suggestion. Ponmudi, as observed by Mr. S. J. Nair, is only at a short distance from Trivandrum. There has been a complaint that because the capital of the State is situated so far south, people from the northern taluks have been experiencing great hardships and difficulties. Now here is a suggestion for shifting, at least for sometime during the year, the capital to another health resort. At present there is a proposal before the Government to open a sanatorium somewhere near Pallivasal. Under such conditions I would make a suggestion whether it is not feasible to find a place somewhere near Pallivasal to remove the headquarters of Government during summer.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): Sir, I rise to a point of order. The resolution relates to the shifting of the headquarters to Ponmudi. I want to know whether the member is in order in referring to Pallivasal being made the headquarters.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The member is quite in order.

MR. K. M. KURIAKOSE (*Muvattupuzha II*): If at all Government think of shifting the headquarters from Trivandrum to any other place it must be to somewhere near Pallivassal.

MR. P. C. KURIYAN (*Kottayam I*): What is the height of Pallivasal?

MR. K. M. KURIAKOSE (*Muvattupuzha II*): I have not got any exact information. But there are suitable places at Pallivasal for a sanatorium, with very great facilities for that. As remarked by Mr. Truscott, Pallivasal is already a business area. There is the Munnar town and several estates close by. So I would earnestly request the Government to take into consideration this suggestion whether it is not feasible to have the headquarters somewhere near the northern extremity of the State preferably near Pallivasal or Munnar. With these words I oppose the resolution.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*): Since the resolution is moved and debated upon, I wish to say a word. It should not appear that the non-official members of the House advocate for the Government moving to the hills in summer as if it were a very important matter in the interests of the public. Whatever that be, I am positively against it whether it is Ponmudi, Muthukuzhivayal, Pallivasal or any other place. It is absolutely unnecessary that the Government should think of moving to anywhere. The officers of Government can very well remain in the planes and do their work and the country will not suffer for want of a shift of this kind to the hills. But there is the other question whether they advocate the opening up of the place and making it suitable as a health resort for people from other parts of the country. That is a matter for consideration. There should be facilities for the people to go to the hills in summer if possible. Now we have very little convenience for that. If Ponmudi is converted into a sanatorium people can resort to that place. That would be a very welcome thing. But apart from that, I am positively against this resolution.

RAO SAHIB MAHAKAVI S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*): I strongly object to the resolution brought forward by Mr. S. J. Nair. Sometime ago, during the time when Mr. Raghaviah was the Dewan of this State, the question of opening up Ponmudi and making it a sanatorium was taken into consideration. The idea, however, had to be given up for two reasons. The first consideration was that there would not be sufficient water. Another consideration was the actual funds that would be needed for making Ponmudi a sanatorium. Money would have to be found for laying out roads and for several other matters which the Government were not in a position to meet at that time. The economic situation has considerably worsened since then, and even if it is possible for us to make money that money should be devoted to the solution of the problem of rural reconstruction which is facing us today. On that consideration it seems to me that it is not a practical proposition at present to go in for a new sanatorium at Ponmudi. As for converting it into the summer headquarters of the Government, it would never be thought of by this House at all unless and until the time comes when Ponmudi becomes a real golden peak so that people may convert it into gold. As for the pious wish expressed by Mr. Truscott, I may add that even if the Government come forward with a final proposition this House will strongly oppose it. In any case, I do not think that the proposal will be taken up to enable the Government to indulge in the extravagance, before Mr. Truscott retires from the State service.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): Sir, I wish to speak a few words on the resolution. I am surprised that such a resolution should have been moved by a non-official member. It is absolutely not to the public interest to shift the headquarters from Trivandrum to Ponmudi during the summer season, nor would it in any way help the officials to discharge their duties more conveniently, and more efficiently. As far as local and climatic conditions of Trivandrum and Ponmudi are taken into consideration, I do not find that there is any need for advocating such a change. Sir, there is some reason for the Government of Madras and the Imperial Government at Delhi to shift their headquarters to Ootacamund and Simla respectively during the summer season. Here the climate is not so extreme as they obtain in those parts. Moreover, our Secretariat buildings are so situated that the officers who work there get the advantage of fine breeze during summer and we have no winter season here. Moreover there are a large number of European officers in the Imperial and Provincial Secretariats and among the heads of departments. The very location of the Secretariat at Trivandrum is attractive, fine, and enviable.

RAO SAHIB MAHAKAVI S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*): May I know whether even here the exodus to hills with regard to the Europeans, is not due to the fact that they are not accustomed to our hot weather?

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): Quite so. Sir, our officers are accustomed well to the climate that obtains at Trivandrum and they do not feel the dreariness of summer as others who are used to cool climates would feel.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): May I know whether Indians will not be able to do better work in cooler climates?

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): They may be, but not as much as the Europeans who may find it hard to work in summer. I hold that a change as is advocated by the resolution would in no way serve to improve the work of our officers.

MR. P. CHIDAMBARAM PILLAI (*Commerce and Industry, South*): May I know whether even now the Government do not consider the proposition a very expensive one as there are only a handful of Europeans?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: There is no need to make any distinction to be drawn between Europeans and Indians in this matter.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): If a particular officer finds it absolutely necessary to go over to a cooler place, even now he can do so and there is nothing that would stand in his way of shifting to a hill. Some years ago when Mr. Watts was the Dewan of Travancore he used to take important papers to the White House, at Ponmudi which was his frequent and favourite resort. So the officers, I mean, the Dewan and heads of departments who particularly require change of climate to do better work can very well do so even at present. With these words, I oppose the resolution.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Some of my friends opposed my resolution basing their arguments on the futility of my proposal. The honourable member Mr. Elenkath really surprised all the other non-official members who advocated such a proposition in this House. Well Sir, I am sorry to say that Mr. Elenkath has not got at least, the idea of the locality of Ponmudi. So far as those places which lie on either side of the road from Trivandrum to Ponmudi are concerned I can say, practically the people of Travancore have no idea of the places. There are vast areas, rich and fertile regions which lie idle there. If only a town is built at Ponmudi for the summer quarters of Government those places would attract the attention of the general public of Travancore. Then they will open their eyes as to the fertility of the soil and as to the possibility of developing agriculture by getting those lands registered in their names and cultivated. It is with that idea that I advocated this proposition.

MR. P. C. KURIYAN (*Kottayam I*): Is it the member's idea that in order to improve a certain locality Government headquarters should be shifted over there?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): It is not only to improve the locality but also to develop the agriculture of the State which is the main source of livelihood for the people of the State.

MR. M. SIVATANU PILLAI (*Tovala*): Cannot agriculture be developed without Ponmudi being made the headquarters of Government?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The honourable member says that it will be doubly useful.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Yes Sir, doubly useful and more useful. Sir, another point which was raised against this proposition is the question of water supply. Sir, there is a stream which runs right

down the peak over and above the existence of a spring on the top. This will solve the water problem. Sir, I can understand the answer given by the Chief Engineer that the question has been engaging the serious attention of Government and now the question is allowed to lie over on account of the financial stringency. That shows, Sir, that Government is anxious to go into the problem and solve it. In view of this answer given on behalf of the Government I do not press the motion.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : Does the House agree to allow Mr. S. J. Nair to withdraw his motion?

MR. PACODE A. NARAYANA PILLAI (Vilavankod) : We object.

The question whether Mr. S. J. Nair could withdraw his motion was put to the vote of the House and lost.

The resolution was then put to the vote of the House and was lost.

CONTRACTS FOR GOVERNMENT WORKS.

MR. S. J. NAIR (Nedumangad) : Sir, I beg to move the following resolution :

"This Assembly recommends to the Government that, whereever possible, Travancoreans be engaged for working Government contracts under the P. W. D. and other departments."

Well, Sir, in point of education, ability, merit, capacity and experience in all branches of life Travancoreans stand second to none. There are able contractors, experienced contractors and monied contractors in Travancore who can do any sort of work that is given to them. But we find in the P. W. D. that an enormous amount of money is expended on original works as well as on other items of works in the State. But big works and paying works are being given to outside contractors, that is, some sort of preference is shown to outsiders in the matter of giving contracts. Even though a local contractor would quote the lowest in the tender, an outsider is preferred invariably. Generally, the work executed by outsiders is far below the average in the matter of quality than that executed by a native. Sir, I can point out instances of this. The work in connection with the Jagathy bridge at Trivandrum was given to an European contractor in spite of the fact that there were several Travancoreans prepared to take it up for lower amounts. Sir, it is just a small bridge over a small river ; and it took about 3 years for completion. On a former occasion to a question put by me to the Chief Engineer, P. W. D., in connection with this, he answered that the Jagathy bridge was completed. But unfortunately even now the road is closed and the work either for the bridge or for the road on both ends of the bridge is still going on.

MR. K. M KRISHNAN (Ambalapuzha II) : Is it not due to the fault of the Water Works Department?

MR. S. J. NAIR (Nedumangad) : It may be due to the fault of either Department. But the road is closed. On the other hand, a contract to build a bridge across the Vamanapuram river was given to a Travancore contractor. It was constructed in 5 months' time ; and the Chief Engineer told me that in the history of the Public Works Department that bridge stood first in the matter of speedy and beautiful execution.